

amendments that addressed issues with food and pet food safety.

While I have discussed several key provisions that have been within the scope of our discussions, we must also discuss what should not be within the scope of this legislation. While a sense of the Senate indicated our desire to make generic biologics—or what I like to call biosimilars—available to American consumers to reduce the costs of some medications while preserving quality, the House has so far made it clear that such legislation would not be welcome on this legislation. They prefer to move through regular order. I understand that desire. I prefer regular order, too.

During our discussion on the Senate floor, there was one provision that I believe put the bill in jeopardy—an importation amendment. The House opted not to include this provision so that they could deal with it at a later date. This bill is not the time for this debate, given that we are focusing on key bipartisan proposals.

So, I turn to the majority leader, and I ask him to refrain from politicizing this issue. I ask him to work with me to define the scope of the conference, to develop a plan for getting this legislation done.

Until the House leadership is in agreement with our plan, we should not force the issue today by appointing conferees too early. If we do this too early, we set ourselves up for the blame game, not for getting this key legislation done. This place should not be about “gotcha” politics when lives are at stake.

Mr. President, I don’t know what the logjam is at the moment. I understand there is some concern on the biologics. There isn’t any reason this cannot be completed, but I am afraid the motion, if we are doing this, would appear to put the blame on the House, or on the Republicans—I am not sure which—and I don’t think we can do that at this point in time. Maybe later in the day.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if this is the way the Senator feels, I am happy to have him and Senator KENNEDY see if this can be worked out.

I withdraw my unanimous consent request.

TRAGEDY IN MINNESOTA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to make a brief comment on the tragedy in Minneapolis, MN. Watching those pictures on television and listening to the accounts on the radio and seeing newspaper accounts and the pictures, this is a real tragedy. My heart and the hearts of all Americans go out to the people of Minnesota—to those who have died, those who have been injured, and certainly the families and friends of all those people.

I am confident we will find out why that disaster occurred. Right now, we don’t know. There is every reason to believe it was not an act of terrorism. I feel that is the case, based on hearing

the Governor of that State making an announcement this morning.

In passing, I say this. After every storm, the sun shines. I think we should look at this tragedy that occurred and make it a wake-up call for us. All over this country, we have crumbling infrastructure—highways, bridges, and dams. We need to take a hard look at that. We need to look at it as the right thing to do and also not only for the fact that the infrastructure needs repairing or rebuilding, but it is good for America in more ways than that.

For every \$1 billion we spend in our crumbling infrastructure, 47,000 high-paying jobs are created. I hope we will take a look at our highways, bridges, dams, water systems, and sewer systems, and see if we can do something about this infrastructure that needs such attention.

We have some things coming up in the Senate in the near future we need to focus on. This tragedy is a wake-up call. We will have the Transportation appropriations bill, and we will have WRDA, which should be coming from the House. We will have Energy and Water appropriations and other matters. We need to work in a bipartisan way and also to work with the White House and have them realize there are things that need to be done with our country’s infrastructure.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

TRAGEDY IN MINNEAPOLIS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, with regard to the tragedy in Minneapolis, our colleagues, Senators COLEMAN and KLOBUCHAR, are either there or on the way there today to not only extend their condolences to their constituents who have been impacted by this but to be as helpful as possible as they go forward with the rescue mission.

I am reminded of the situation in my State, where the Ohio River goes along the northern border of Kentucky, almost for the entire State, and then when it empties into the Mississippi, it goes southward—the same river over which the Minneapolis bridge collapsed.

We have bridges all along both the Ohio and the Mississippi. Bridge construction and safety has been a big issue in the Commonwealth of Kentucky in recent years.

I share the concerns of the majority leader about reports of the state of our infrastructure in America. We all pray for the victims of the Minneapolis tragedy. It may well serve as a reminder of our need to be ever aware of the dangers that confront our infrastructure in this country.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, with regard to the time allocation on our side during consideration of the lobbying bill, I ask unanimous consent that the time under the control of the Republicans be allocated as follows: Senator COBURN, 10 minutes; Senator DEMINT, 10 minutes; Senator MCCAIN, 10 minutes; Senator GRASSLEY, 5 minutes; and Senator STEVENS, 10 minutes; with the remaining time for myself or my designee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE ABSENCE OF THE SENATORS FROM MINNESOTA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I should have mentioned this. I appreciate very much my distinguished counterpart mentioning Senator KLOBUCHAR and Senator COLEMAN. I listened to them being interviewed last night on television. You could tell from their presentations how much this meant to them.

AMY KLOBUCHAR’s house is, I think, a mile from where the bridge collapsed. Today, they are where they should be. We have matters in the Senate, and we will certainly miss them. For example, Senator KLOBUCHAR has been heavily involved in this ethics and lobbying reform measure. If there were ever a situation where they should miss votes, this is it.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the amendment of the House to S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Message from the House of Representatives to accompany S. 1, entitled “An Act To Provide Greater Transparency in the Legislative Process.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 hours of debate prior to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from California is recognized.

TRAGEDY IN MINNESOTA

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, quickly, before I begin, I also wish to send my very deep condolences to those families who will have lost their loved ones in this very tragic bridge collapse. I heard the mayor on the television this morning, and it brought me back to my days as mayor. I know what this